

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 00736 200942Z

17

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 IO-14 DRC-01 /105 W

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R 200823Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7805

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE RANGOON 0736

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT BM

SUBJECT: GUB OFFERS AMNESTY TO INSURGENTS

1. PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY MARCH 18 ADOPTED AMNESTY RESOLUTION AND STATE COUNCIL MARCH 19 ISSUED PROCLAMATION OFFERING AMNESTY TO INSURGENTS WHO SURRENDER WITHIN 90 DAYS (BEFORE JUNE 16). EXCEPTED FROM AMNESTY OFFER ARE INSURGENTS AGAINST WHOM CHARGES OF MURDER, RAPE, PERSONAL INJURY, OR DAMAGE TO PRIVATE PROPERTY ARE FILED BY PRIVATE CITIZENS BEFORE NEXT SEPTEMBER 16. SUCH INDIVIDUALS ARE ENTITLED, HOWEVER, TO LENIENCY IN SENTENCING (NOT MORE THAN 10 YEARS FOR MURDER OR THREE YEARS FOR OTHER OFFENSES).

2. COUPLED WITH AMNESTY OFFER WERE REMISSIONS OF SENTENCES FOR CONVICTS (ORDINARY AS WELL AS POLITICAL) NOW IN PRISON. DEATH SENTENCES ARE COMMUTED TO "UNLIMITED" PRISON TERMS, WHILE PRISON SENTENCES ARE REDUCED BY ONE THIRD.

3. EDITORIAL MARCH 20 IN OFFICIAL WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY NOTED THAT LOSS TO COUNTRY FROM CHRONIC INSURGENCY INCLUDES LOSS OF SERVICES OF "MAN MEN OF ABILITY, PATRIOTIC TRADITIONS AND CONVICTION (THOUGH MISGUIDED) WHO AT ONE TIME HAD BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 RANGOO 00736 200942Z

COMRADES-IN-ARMS WITH THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNTRY."

REFERENCE IS TO THAI-BASED PDP LEADERSHIP, WHICH INCLUDES THREE OF THE THIRTY COMRADES PLUS U THWIN.

4. COMMENT: THIS GESTURE TOWARD INSURGENTS, THOUGH LESS SUBSTANTIAL THAN GUB'S 1963 INVITATION TO NEGOTIATE, IS STILL AN IMPROVEMENT ON THE LONG PRISON SENTENCES WHICH HAVE RECENTLY BEEN IMPOSED ON SEVERAL CONVICTED PDP SUPPORTERS. PDP FORTUNES HAVE RECENTLY BEEN DOWNGRADE, AND SEVERAL SURRENDERS BY LOW-LEVEL PDP LEADERS (NOTABLY A SON OF BO SETKYA) HAVE RECENTLY BEEN REPORTED IN PRESS. AMNESTY OFFER THUS SEEMS AIMED PRIMARILY AT PDP PLUS SOME OF WEAKER AND LESS SUCCESSFUL ETHNIC INSURGENT GROUPS --E.G., SHANS, MONS, AND DELTA KARENS.

5. IT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING IF AMNESTY OFFER WERE FOLLOWED UP BY PRIVATE OVERTURES AND OFFERS OF REASSURANCES TO ANY TOP PDP LEADERS PREPARED TO RETURN TO BURMA. AT SAME TIME, WITH VISIT BY THAI FOREIGN MINISTER EXPECTED NEXT MONTH, AMNESTY OFFER PLACES GUB IN STRONG POSITION TO PRESS FOR FURTHER EFFECTIVE RTG ACTION AGAINST THAI-BASED INSURGENTS.

6. ALTHOUGH AMNESTY OFFER DOES NOT APPLY TO NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS CURRENTLY UNDER TRIAL (SUC OS LO HSING-HAN) IT WOULD APPLY TO NARCOTICS AS WELL AS OTHER OFFENSES BY ANY ARMED GROUPS WHO SURRENDER BEFORE DEADLINE. IN PARTICULAR, IT WOULD SEEM TO APPLY TO JIMMY YANG IF HE RETURNS "VOLUNATARILY" BEFORE JUNE 16.
OSBORN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW, PARAMILITARY FORCES, AMNESTY, CRIMES, MURDER, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, PENAL SYSTEM, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, MEETINGS, POLITICAL PRISONERS, TRIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974RANGOO00736
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740058-0771
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740329/aaaabawo.tel
Line Count: 88
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <29 JUL 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GUB OFFERS AMNESTY TO INSURGENTS
TAGS: PINT, BM
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005